



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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NEWS RELEASE

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R.I. SAT participation increases; scores change only slightly

About 57% (5,718) of the seniors in Rhode Island public high schools took SAT exams last year, an increase of about 5% from 2009. The SAT scores dropped one point in reading (to 485) and four points in writing (to 478) and improved by one point in mathematics (488), according to results the College Board released today (September 13).

Participation rates improved significantly among some student groups, including an 11.8% increase in participation among Black students and a 5.6% increase among Hispanic students.

Over the past ten years, Rhode Island SAT scores have declined by 12 points in reading and 8 points in mathematics. (The writing exam was introduced in 2006.) Rhode Island scores remain the lowest in New England, except for Maine, which tests all high-school seniors.

The SAT scores for all Rhode Island seniors (including nonpublic schools) are 494 in reading (down 4 points), 495 in mathematics (down 1 point), and 488 in writing (down 6 points).

The College Board also reported that 2,726 Rhode Island public-school students took AP exams during the last school year, an increase of 4.2%, including an 84% increase among Hispanic students and a 19% increase among Black students.

“Our priority is to improve our graduation rate and to ensure that all of our graduates are ready for success in college and careers,” said Robert G. Flanders, Jr., Esq., Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. “We are trending in the right direction on participation rates, but our improvements are not aggressive enough and we are concerned about the decline in our SAT scores.”

According to the College Board, the increased participation in AP is in part the result of efforts in the Providence schools to provide AP courses in all high schools, as well as the Pre-AP program (Springboard) that three districts (Central Falls, Cranston, and Lincoln) have adopted.

“Success on the SAT and access to AP course work is critical to meeting our goals,” said Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “We are pleased with the progress Providence has made in providing access, and we will continue to support these efforts to provide more access to challenging, college-level courses, particularly in districts serving traditionally underrepresented groups such as students of color and students in living in poverty.”

A table showing SAT scores by high school is posted on the RIDE Web site, at:
http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/PSAT_SAT.aspx

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